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\* Bellarmini Concio. xxviii. Oper. tom. vii., col. 296; Colon, 1617.

and sobriety which characterise those who have long enjoyed the blessings of national liberty, morality, and pure religion? So far are the occasional excesses, which unhappily disfigured the revival of religion in the 16th century, from being any real reproach to it, that we unhesitatingly assert they are chargeable on the corruptions which degraded the mediæval system of Papal Rome. Every generation uttered against the licentiousness of the Reformation recoils with augmented force upon that Church which, by the intolerable scandals of which outraged humanity at length rose in arms.

So much in reference to the general charges brought against the Reformation, on the score of the heretical opinions and wild excesses of the Anabaptists and other fanatical sectaries. Let us now turn our attention to the special case of the leading Reformers themselves. The principles of the Reformation, it is argued, must be false, because Luther, Calvin, and the rest, were, individually, ungodly men. It is impossible to imagine that God would have permitted such men to be instrumental in reforming his Church, supposing it stood in need of reformation. The scriptural answer to this objection has been already virtually given in our last number. To what was there said we may now add, that the Old Testament furnishes us with a striking example of God's employing, for the reformation of his ancient Church, the agency of a man, who at the very time was committing a great sin, and continued to commit it as long as he lived. We allude to the case of Jehu. He destroyed the worshippers of Baal, and executed the divine vengeance on the house of Ahab. But he still upheld the idolatrous worship of the golden calves; that great abomination which is specially designated the sin of Jeroboam. The following words deserve our best attention, as bearing upon the point before us:—"And the Lord said to Jehu: Because thou hast diligently executed that which was right and pleasing in my eyes, and hast done to the house of Ahab according to all that was in my heart: thy children shall sit upon the throne of Israel to the fourth generation. But Jehu took no heed to walk in the law of the Lord the God of Israel with all his heart; for he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam, who had made Israel to sin."—4 Kings x. 30, 31. No sin alleged against the Reformers is comparable for enormity to that which Jehu habitually practised. And yet he was a reformer chosen of God. By the special appointment of Jehovah he was anointed king over Israel.—4 Kings ix. 1—3.

But let us admit, as we said before, that the purity of the Protestant faith is vitiated by the supposed sinfulness of those who in the sixteenth century promulgated it. This amounts to a virtual recognition of the principle that sanctity of life is an essential note of a true Church. Let us, then, examine the result of this principle when applied to the Church of Rome, carefully bearing in mind that this Church boasts that she, and she alone, possesses one attribute of Deity—the attribute of infallibility. It is important also to remember that while (strange as it certainly is) there is no unanimity respecting the seat and organ of that asserted infallibility, the ultramontane Romanists claim it for the successor of St. Peter. The Pope, then, according to the universally received doctrine of the Church of Rome, is the organ of the faith of Christendom; and, according to the most influential party in that Church, he is the infallible organ. In his case, then, if anywhere, we should surely expect to find purity of life as well as purity of doctrine. If the character of the Reformed Churches must be identified with that of Luther and the other Reformers, who claimed no supernatural exemption from human weaknesses, much more must the character of the Church of Rome be involved in that of its infallible rulers. Any reasoning which would justify us in arguing from the unworthiness of the Reformers to the necessary worthlessness of the Reformation, will apply with tenfold force to the wickedness of Popes viewed in connection with the purity of the Church of Rome. Well, then, what do we learn from the inexorable records of Ecclesiastical History? As early as the fourth century Pope Marcellinus, if Pope Nicholas I. is to be believed, terrified, by the fear of death, apostatized from the faith, and sacrificed to heathen idols! The successor of St. Peter, the vicar of Christ, became—an idolater!\* In the same century, somewhat later, Pope Liberius, weary of banishment, subscribed to the Arian heresy! The successor of St. Peter, the vicar of Christ, became—a heretic!† Poor Cranmer has been branded with every vile epithet that could be thought of, because, when threatened with an agonizing death, he, in a moment of weakness, was induced to renounce the reformed faith: an act which, almost immediately after, he bitterly lamented, and testified his abhorrence of at the stake, by the well-known action which even Voltaire has paragonized as being more intrepid and magnanimous than that of the ancient Roman. Cranmer's momentary apostasy furnishes rather a dangerous triumph to the advocates of the Church of Rome, so long as the cases of Popes Marcellinus and Liberius stand on record. Cranmer, under the fear of death, abandoned—he it so—the Protestant faith, professing still to be a Christian. Pope Marcellinus, under the same fear, abandoned his God, and sacrificed to idols. Cranmer, to avoid the lingering tortures of fire, subscribed a renunciation of the peculiar doctrines of the Reformation, retaining the com-

mon doctrines of Christianity. Pope Liberius, to escape the tedium of banishment, subscribed to the deadly heresy of Arianism. Passing over the cases of Pope Anastasius II. in the fifth century, and Pope Vigilius in the sixth, who have both been charged with heresy,\* we next come to Pope Honorius, in the seventh century, who was condemned as a Monothelite heretic by the sixth and seventh general Councils,† and anathematized as such by at least two Popes—viz., Agatho and Leo II.‡ Leo's words are, "We anathematize also Honorius, who did not enlighten this apostolic church with the doctrine delivered by the Apostles, but attempted to subvert the undefiled faith by profane treachery."

The state of the Roman See during the tenth century, as described by Baronius, the great papal Annalist, is frightful to contemplate. In his preliminary observations to the tenth century, he writes thus:—"A new age begins, which, from its asperity and barrenness of good, has been usually called the iron age; from the deformity of its exuberant wickedness, the leaden age; and from its poverty of writers, the dark age. Standing on the threshold of which, we have deemed it necessary to premise something, lest the weak-minded should be at all scandalized if he sometimes should happen to behold the abomination of desolation standing in the temple. Scarcely can any one believe what unworthy, foul, execrable, and abominable things the sacred Apostolic See has been compelled to suffer. . . . Oh shame! Oh grief! how many monsters, horrible to be seen, were intruded into that seat which is to be revered even by angels! What tragedies were there enacted! With what filth was it her fate to be besmeared who was herself without spot or wrinkle! With what stench to be infected! With what loathsome impurities to be defiled, and by these to be blackened with eternal infamy!" And, again,§ "What was then the face of the Holy Roman Church! How unutterably foul! When harlots, at once most infamous and all-powerful, ruled at Rome; at whose will, Sees were changed, bishops presented, and—what is horrible to hear and utter—their paramours intruded into the chair of Peter." During that tenth century alone, thirty Pontiffs occupied the papal chair, each succeeding one, for the most part, surpassing, if possible, his predecessor in abominable crimes. The mind sickens in reviewing the enormities of these monsters of wickedness. John XII., to select one name from the revolting list, who ascended the papal throne in 956, was convicted by a Roman Synod, convened by the Emperor Otto the Great, of almost every enormity to be found in the catalogue of crime—blasphemy, perjury, profanation, impiety, sacrilege, simony, adultery, incest, murder.

Twenty years later, 974, came Boniface VII., whom Baronius brands as a murderer and a robber. One Roman historian, Cardinal Benno, tells us that in the interval between Pope Silvester II. and Gregory VII. (999–1073), five of the popes, including these two, were magicians. Platina, the biographer of the popes, goes farther, and says that magic was practised by all the popes from Silvester to Gregory. The heinousness of this practice must not be estimated by reference to our modern notions. It must be remembered that, in the ages under consideration, magic was universally regarded, even by those who practised it, as connected with satanic agency. Of Silvester, in particular, Platina informs us that, impelled by ambition and a diabolical lust of power, he obtained the pontifical dignity by the assistance of the devil, on the condition of doing homage to the evil spirit, and consigning his soul to everlasting perdition after death. Towards the close of the 15th century, Pope Sixtus IV. occupied the papal chair. He has been charged with unnatural crimes; and it is recorded that he devised a new mode of replenishing the sacred treasury—namely, the establishment of brothels in Rome! It would be superfluous to say a word about Pope Alexander VI. A Romish historian was obliged to combine three of the most atrocious monsters to be found in the annals of Pagan Rome, in order to obtain anything like a parallel to the enormities of Borgia. Nero, Caligula, and Heliogabalus, must be united in order to shadow forth the character of—if it may be said without impiety—this vicar of Christ. His successor, but one, Julius II., scarcely, if at all, fell short of his wickedness. Perjury, poisoning, assassination, drunkenness, unnatural crime, were laid to his charge. He was, moreover, a ferocious and merciless soldier. It was a saying of those times that the earth drank in more blood in a single day, shed through his means, than he himself, and his fellow-revellers, had drunk wine during his whole pontificate. This worthy successor of the Apostles is said, when once leading an army against his enemies, to have flung into the Tiber the keys of St. Peter, with the words—

Cum Petri nihil efficient ad proelia claves,  
Auxilio Pauli forsitan evisis erit.

To conclude this dismal retrospect. Some of the infallible depositaries of the Roman Catholic faith were, we are informed by credible witnesses, unbelievers, and even Atheists! Pius Mirandula, who wrote towards the end of the 15th century, tells us of one Pope who, denying that

there was a God, confirmed this miserable impiety by the vile means through which he obtained possession of the papedom, and the equally execrable manner in which he conducted himself as Pope. The same author speaks of another Pope who, while living, declared to one of his friends that he did not believe in the immortality of the soul. But after his death he appeared to the same person, telling him that he had found, to his endless misery and torment, that the soul which he deemed to be perishable was immortal.\*

It is with much reluctance that we sully our pages with particulars of this kind. From such revolting details every right-minded man instinctively recoils. To the Christian, jealous for the honour of his most holy faith, such abominations are a source of mingled indignation, shame, and sorrow; while to the infidel they furnish matter for a triumphant scoff, or a malignant sneer. We would willingly consign such dismal records of the past to the oblivion which is their fitting doom; and we would leave those wretched men who disgraced not only the name of Christian but our common humanity, to the judgment of Him whose honour they have impiously blasphemed, and whose eternal laws they have trodden under foot. But controversialists of the stamp of Mr. Keenan will not permit us to do so. They compel us to drag forth from their foul obscurity these deeds of darkness. When they brand the Reformers as heretics, because they dared to quit a communion in which, from the palace of the Vatican to the cell of the monastery, from the Pope to the mendicant friar, and thence through every fibre of the social and religious system, vice and immorality were practised and unblushingly avowed; and withal arrogate to that communion the august epithet of *holy*: when they cast in our teeth the invented crimes of a Luther, a Calvin, and a Cranmer, and exclaim in a tone of malicious triumph—"Behold the apostles of Protestantism! Can the religion be true which had such advocates?" we are obliged, when engaged with those who cannot or will not see the invalidity of such an inference, to retort the argument. And to do so, we are compelled to re-open the polluted pages of history—not our historians but their own—and point out to them there, scenes of iniquity perpetrated by the supreme rulers of a Church claiming to be exclusively holy and infallible, before which the vilest accusations which deadly hatred has been able to invent against the Reformers dwindle into utter insignificance.

Let any candid Roman Catholic, of plain common sense, peruse the history of the Popes, and then let him say whether he feels inclined to press the argument against the Reformation from the supposed unworthiness of the Reformers.

### THE HEIR OF BALLYMANUS—No. III.

Not long after the meeting with Mr. Oldham, which we recorded in our last chapter, the time of Frank's stay in Rome expired, and he turned his steps homewards. His health and spirits had certainly profited by his travels, but we fear that he had not changed for the better in other respects. He was no longer the sincere and earnest inquirer after truth he once had been. What he had seen on the Continent had convinced him that the religion he there saw developed, contained more of human invention than of revelation from God; yet he sought for nothing purer or better. The disappointment in which his first anxious search for religious truth had ended, had a tendency to give him a distaste for such investigations; while again he was unconsciously influenced by the example of many whom he met abroad, who believed no more than himself, and yet who observed the conformity with the religion of their country, which prudence dictated, only avenging themselves for their compliance by many a bitter jest on it in private. Thus Frank, too, had fallen into a light and careless way of talking on religious subjects; he could enjoy a jest at the expense of the religion he professed; yet, if a serious attack were made on it (by his friend, Graham, for instance), he preferred to turn off the discourse by some sportive answer, rather than encounter the risk of becoming again a prey to those anxious doubts which had once so cruelly disturbed his repose.

When, however, he again set foot on English ground, many slumbering emotions were stirred up. During his year or two of absence, he thought he had taught himself to look calmly back on his acquaintance with Edith, as belonging to a chapter in his life now closed; and when he remembered the tumultuous passions which had then agitated him, it was with such feelings as those with which the traveller, who has escaped one of the fires which sweep over an American prairie, might survey the scene over which the flame had passed, while scarce yet composed from the agitation which he had undergone, and still not fearing that the charred and blackened soil around him could afford materials for such another conflagration. Now, however, as he drew near to London, the feelings which had filled his mind when he had been last there, naturally took possession of it again. While he was abroad, his correspondents had been able to tell him nothing of Edith; and now (useless though, he said to himself, it was to entertain any curiosity regarding one of whom he ought to think no more), he could not refrain from constant speculations—was she then in London? Was it possible he might meet her? How was it likely

\* For Anastasius vid. Damas. Pontif. ap. Labbe. tom. v., c. 403, and for Vigilius vid. Liberat. Breviar., cap. 22. Galland. Bib. Pat. tom. xii., p. 156.

† Vid. Labbe, tom. vii., c. 977; tom. viii., c. 1305.

‡ Vid. Labbe, tom. vii., c. 660, 1156.

§ Baron. Ann. Eccles. Ann. 900.

|| Ann. Eccles. Ann. 912.

\* Platina. In Marcellin. p. 39.

† Athan. Ep. ad Solet., tom. i., 368. Hieronym. Chronicon. oper. tom. viii., c. 796.

\* Pic. Mirand. de Fid. et Ord. Cred. Theor. 4.